

PURCHASE OF LAND FOR THE FEDERAL BUILDING IN BROOKLYN, N. Y.

JULY 22, 1886.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. ROCKWELL, from the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 4620.]

The Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, having had under consideration the bill (H. R. 4620) for the purchase of land for the Federal building in Brooklyn, N. Y., submit the following report:

On July 12, 1882, an act of Congress was approved providing for the purchase of a site and the erection thereon of a public building for the city of Brooklyn, and limiting the cost to \$800,000, a sum utterly inadequate, as subsequent events clearly demonstrated. For over a year and a half the Secretary of the Treasury (Charles J. Folger) endeavored to select a suitable site at a sum proportionate with the limit of total cost for site and building, as provided in the act. Twice he sent the Supervising Architect to examine and report; he selected a commission of responsible citizens of the city of New York for the same purpose, and subsequently himself visited Brooklyn and made a selection; but upon inquiry he found that the cost of his selection would absorb the entire sum appropriated for both land and building.

On February 16, 1884, after long and careful deliberation, the following order was sent to Brooklyn:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., February 16, 1884.

SIR: I have decided to select as a site for the public building to be erected in your city the property offered by you at \$450,000, consisting of one hundred and ninety-seven feet on Washington street, two hundred and thirty-five feet on Johnson street, and one hundred and ninety-seven feet on Adams street.

In approving this location it is upon the unqualified condition that the Government shall receive a clear and perfect title to the property described at a price not to exceed in any event the amount named above.

Very respectfully,

CHARLES J. FOLGER,
Secretary.

MR. LEONARD MOODY,
Real Estate Agent, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Under this order the property now held by the Government was purchased, but unfortunately, instead of securing the entire plat as described in the order, the Secretary, because one of the sellers refused to carry out her contract and deliver title, consented to relinquish two lots, thereby reducing the plot to 175 feet by 235. The cost to the Govern-

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ment of the site, as finally purchased, was \$408,500. With this reduction and with 40 feet taken off for a roadway between it and adjoining buildings, as required by law, there was left for the building a plot 135 feet by 235 feet, which would furnish a building barely large enough for the present requirements of the post-office with its enormous business, the United States courts, with offices for the United States marshal, United States commissioner, and internal-revenue collector, without leaving room for the future growth of business.

The population of Brooklyn is 800,000. The census report of 1880 put it at 566,663, showing a gain in six years of 233,337—a gain of over 40 per cent. At the same ratio of increase in four years more her population will reach 1,000,000. With the impetus given through the opening of the great bridge to travel, and the development of elevated railroads, it is estimated that the time is not far distant when her population will equal that of New York City. In population it is the third city in the Union, as it is also in the number of its manufacturing and other industries.

In view of these facts it is quite evident that in the near future the public building as planned will be inadequate to the requirements of the Government. To guard against this and to remedy the mistake at the time of the purchase, in relinquishing a part of the proposed plot, bill H. R. 4620 was introduced to the House.

The bill provides for the purchase of the remainder of the block, of which the Government now owns rather more than a half. The dimensions of the entire block are about 320 feet by 235. The Government holds the title to 175 feet by 235, leaving a plot of about 175 feet by 235, to be acquired.

The short-sighted policy of securing barely sufficient land for the present wants in the large and rapidly growing cities is clearly shown in the New York and Philadelphia public buildings. In the case of the former, for several years the pressure for more room has been very great, and in the latter city the accommodations are sufficient only for the present time, and already there is talk of future enlargement, and a looking about for more land.

With the remainder of the block the Government would have room for future growth. It would give space for a building containing rather more square feet than are within the walls of either the New York or Philadelphia buildings. It is not considered necessary that the Government should do anything more than cover the ground of the original purchase with a building at this time, but your committee are fully persuaded that as the remainder of the block can now be purchased at a price not excessive, that it is the course of wisdom to secure it before it passes from the hands of its present owners, or is built upon with new and valuable structures.

The buildings now upon the ground are of little value, but as the future of the street is assured, the property cannot long remain as it is. This block is upon the crown of the hill, and Washington street, from which side will be the principal entrance to the Government offices, is the great highway to the bridge, which for the year ending June 1 accommodated 25,000,000 passengers and about 700,000 vehicles. In view of the above facts and the additional argument which is contained in the letters and statistics hereto appended, your committee recommend the passage of the bill, with the following amendment: In line 9, after the word "exceed," strike out "three hundred and fifty" and insert "two hundred and seventy-five."

The Supervising Architect in a communication addressed to the honorable Secretary of the Treasury under date of March 17, 1886, says upon this subject:

As to the advisability of purchasing the additional ground composing the remainder of the block upon which the structure is located, I am fully of the opinion that this should be done. The buildings now occupying said ground are nearly all frame, and in case of fire would greatly endanger the new building. In looking at the future necessities, also, of the Government, it will be more economical for the Government to acquire this additional ground at the present time than any time in the future, should additions to the present building be required.

OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF REPAIRS
UNITED STATES PUBLIC BUILDINGS,
New York, June 14, 1886.

Hon. FELIX CAMPBELL, M. C.:

MY DEAR SIR: In accordance with your verbal request, I visited the new post-office building now being erected in Brooklyn, with a view of determining whether, in my judgment, additional ground should be acquired adjoining the plot already the property of the Government. Unhesitatingly I now express the opinion that the balance of the block, extending on the northerly side to Tillary street, a distance of about 175 feet, should be purchased by the Government, and for many obvious reasons. The building will be hemmed in on all other sides by narrow streets and many high buildings. With the additional land one side would have a goodly area for light and air and protection from fire. If the land is put into a small park until such future time as it will be needed for an extension to the structure now building—and one must remember what the growth of Brooklyn will be in another twenty years—the space will be a public convenience and give a more commanding appearance to the building itself. The additional land can be purchased for a far more reasonable price than a year or two hence, for with the completion of the post-office building land will increase enormously in value.

You will be but doing a justice to the interests of your city, as well as to the General Government, by earnestly and persistently advocating a purchase of the additional ground.

Very truly, yours.

WM. J. FRYER, JR.

The following statement of the post-office business for the fiscal year 1885 is submitted:

Stamps sold.....	\$388,949 09
Money-orders issued.....	589,203 31
Money-orders paid.....	288,016 90
Postage on local matter.....	258,544 43
Number of employes.....	332
Registered letters and parcels mailed and received for delivery.....	133,527
Pieces delivered by carriers.....	32,387,319
Pieces collected by carriers.....	16,885,832
Pieces delivered from boxes, general delivery.....	936,000
Number of lock-pouches received.....	43,875
Number of lock-pouches sent.....	42,970
Number of tie-sacks received.....	49,642
Number of tie-sacks sent.....	52,202

Rent paid by the United States in Brooklyn:

Post-office.....	\$4,500
United States courts.....	10,000
Collector of internal revenue.....	4,000
Total.....	18,500

4 PURCHASE OF LAND FOR BUILDING IN BROOKLYN, N. Y.

POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE FIRST ASSISTANT POSTMASTER-GENERAL,
FREE-DELIVERY DIVISION,
Washington, D. C., April 10, 1886.

SIR: As you request, I have the honor to submit the following, showing carriers, pieces handled by them, and gross receipts of Brooklyn post-office for the years 1876 to 1885, inclusive:

Years.	Carriers.	Pieces handled.	Gross receipts.
1876.....	89	14, 332, 127	\$178, 838 14
1877.....	89	15, 613, 485	287, 649 84
1878.....	89	15, 673, 088	356, 524 32
1879.....	93	18, 578, 812	401, 874 15
1880.....	110	21, 426, 769	229, 072 44
1881.....	116	25, 449, 478	248, 913 58
1882.....	127	29, 435, 154	290, 737 85
1883.....	133	34, 815, 447	340, 522 40
1884.....	141	40, 639, 838	350, 124 35
1885.....	161	46, 290, 214	377, 879 87

Very respectfully,

A. E. STEVENSON,
First Assistant Postmaster-General.

Hon. FELIX CAMPBELL,
House of Representatives.

Cost of public buildings and sites.

Proposed cost of Brooklyn building.....	\$2, 000, 000
Proposed cost of additional land.....	350, 000
Cost of present site.....	408, 600
Cost of site for Chicago post-office.....	1, 250, 000
Cost of building for Chicago post-office.....	4, 600, 000
Cost of building at New Orleans.....	4, 000, 000
Cost of building at New York.....	8, 000, 000
Cost of site at New York.....	1, 000, 000
Cost of building at Philadelphia.....	4, 500, 000
Cost of site at Philadelphia.....	1, 500, 000
Cost of building in Saint Louis.....	5, 000, 000
Cost of building in Hartford, Conn.....	1, 000, 000
Cost of building in Boston.....	4, 500, 000
Cost of site in Boston.....	1, 300, 000

FEDERAL BUILDING AT BROOKLYN, N. Y.

JULY 27, 1886.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. DIBBLE, from the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, submitted the following

VIEWS OF THE MINORITY:

[To accompany bill H. R. 4620.]

The undersigned cannot concur with the majority of the committee, in recommending the passage of this bill, and present the following statement, embracing a recapitulation of the facts and their reasons for opposing this measure:

On December 16, 1881, a bill was introduced in the House by a member from the city of Brooklyn (Mr. Bliss), providing for an appropriation of \$800,000 for the purchase of a site and the erection of a public building in that city (First session, Forty-seventh Congress, H. R. 1089).

On February 7, 1882, another Representative of Brooklyn (Mr. J. Hyatt Smith), who was a member of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, reported favorably a substitute for the bill, fixing the limit of cost "for site and building complete," at the same amount (House Report 273). This substitute passed both houses of Congress and became a law July 12, 1882 (22 Stat. at Large, 161). It contained no appropriation, but in the sundry civil act of August 12, 1882, an appropriation was passed in the following words (22 Stat. at Large, 304), viz:

To enable the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase a site, and commence the erection thereon of a building for the uses of the Government in the city of Brooklyn, as provided by law, three hundred thousand dollars.

On March 3, 1883, a further appropriation was made, as follows (22 Stat., 604), viz:

For post-office at Brooklyn, New York: For continuation, two hundred thousand dollars.

From the foregoing summary it appears that Representatives from Brooklyn proposed, and the Congress authorized and directed, the purchase of a site, which was to cost less than \$300,000, and the erection of a public building thereon, within a limit of \$800,000, for site and building complete.

Notwithstanding this, we find that a site was purchased at a cost of \$408,500, leaving less than \$400,000 for the erection of the building; and a building is now in process of construction, based upon a plan which will not furnish suitable accommodations for the Government, and which inevitably commits Congress to further appropriations beyond the limits authorized by law, to the extent of \$1,500,000 for the building alone, according to the estimates now made by the Supervising Architect.

Here, then, is the situation: According to law, the limit of the site and building is fixed at \$800,000. But the fact is that a lot has been purchased at a cost of over one-half this sum and a building is being erected upon about one-half of the lot purchased. This building will not answer the purposes for which it is being constructed unless extended over the rest of the site purchased, according to a plan involving an increase of the cost of the building alone to the sum of \$1,500,000. A proposition to authorize this expenditure is now pending. But that proposition does not involve the purchase of any additional ground, for the Government is now erecting a building which covers only one-half of the ground already owned by the United States. Besides this, Congress is asked to go further, and to authorize an expenditure of \$275,000 for the purchase of additional land, on which it is not proposed to erect any building at all at present. The undersigned oppose this purchase as an unnecessary outlay of the public moneys.

During the last Congress the purchase of the present site in Brooklyn was the subject of an extended investigation, under resolutions of the House, directing inquiry into certain charges of corrupt and collusive action on the part of officers of the Government. These charges were not sustained by the evidence; but the testimony then taken throws light upon the present proposition, and is referred to for that purpose only. The proceedings of the House will be found in the Congressional Record of the Forty-eighth Congress, first session, pages 2222, 3058, 3059, 4803-4808, 5162, 5344-5348, and in the Appendix, pages 299-303. The testimony alluded to is contained in House Mis. Doc. No. 59 of the same session.

From the said testimony it appears:

(1) That in February, 1884, the Secretary of the Treasury agreed to purchase the southern portion of square No. 20, in the city of Brooklyn, bounded by Washington, Johnson, and Adams streets, fronting 235 feet on Johnson street, and running back 197 feet along Washington and Adams streets, respectively, for \$450,000 (House Mis. Doc. 59, first session, Forty-eighth Congress, page 8). Subsequently, a strip of land 22 feet wide, along the northern side of this property, was released from the agreement by the Secretary of the Treasury, in consideration of a deduction of \$41,500 in the price. But before releasing this parcel the Secretary inquired of the Supervising Architect whether the remaining portion, embracing an area of 232 feet by 175 feet, would be large enough for the purposes of the Government, and the Supervising Architect reported that it was sufficient. And yet this very strip of land, and about 122 feet more, is now recommended for purchase by the same officer who advised its release two years ago. We append the testimony of Mr. Bell, the Supervising Architect, taken in April, 1884. (See House Mis. Doc. 59, p. 23).

Q. Was this amount of \$41,500 to be deducted from the \$450,000 to be paid for the site?—A. Yes, sir; and the Secretary asked me whether there would be sufficient ground or not without these two pieces of property, and I told him there would be, and you will see on record my letter in relation to that. With these two pieces off the frontage there is considerably more than the Dutch Church property.

The letter referred to in the foregoing testimony is as follows:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISING ARCHITECT,
March 29, 1864.

SIR: In reply to your verbal inquiry as to whether, in case the Titus and Hoffman lots should be omitted from the purchase in the Johnson street site for the Brooklyn public building, the remaining would be of sufficient size for the proposed building,

have the honor to say that the dimensions of the property without these two lots are 175 by 335 feet, which are, in my judgment, sufficiently large, in view of the fact that the property is surrounded on three sides by streets.

The saving effected by this omission (\$41,500) will materially increase the amount to be expended upon the building, and will leave \$91,500 of the present appropriation for the commencement of work; and for these reasons I have the honor to recommend the omission from the purchase of these two lots.

Very respectfully,

M. E. BELL,
Supervising Architect.

HON. CHAS. J. FOLGER,
Secretary of the Treasury.

In this connection we quote from the testimony of Secretary Folger. (*Ibid.*, page 37.)

Q. State if, in your opinion, from the information you now have, you are satisfied that this purchase had better be consummated if it can be, with as little delay as possible.—A. I think it would end the agitation in Brooklyn, and I think by giving them this site they will have a fair site, which will be suitable for all reasonable business purposes, and procure them a good building in the end. I have no doubt you will have to make a further appropriation to finish the building, but we can make a start when this question of site is settled.

(2) That in April, 1883, the Secretary of the Treasury appointed a commission of three disinterested persons to aid in selecting a site for the Brooklyn building, and after public sessions in the city hall, and examination of thirteen sites offered, this commission recommended as its first choice the Myrtle avenue property, embracing about 50,851 square feet; and as its second choice, the Fulton street site, embracing about 29,483 square feet; and as its third choice, the Flatbush avenue site, embracing about 33,415 square feet. (House Mis. Doc. 59, pp. 3 and 4.) The Dutch Church property (which at one time the Secretary of the Treasury was disposed to purchase, and which was advocated by Messrs. Felix Campbell, Robinson, and Slocum, members of Congress from Brooklyn, and opposed by Mr. James, also a representative from that city) embraced about 42,840 square feet. The property purchased embraces 41,125 square feet; so that it is clearly above the average quantity of land deemed necessary by those who were entrusted with this matter.

But another consideration enters into this calculation. The amount of space allowed as fire space, by common custom, for buildings erected by the United States, is 40 feet of distance from any other building. Let us make this deduction, and compare the various sites proposed with the fire space deducted. This will result as follows, viz:

	Square feet
Myrtle avenue site	41,185
Fulton street site	29,483
Flatbush avenue site	33,415
Dutch Church site	42,840
Site chosen by United States	41,125

So that we observe that the site purchased by the Government is fairly above the average in size of the sites recommended by the special commission and by the members of Congress from Brooklyn.

It will be interesting to recall the testimony of Mr. Felix Campbell, of Brooklyn, then a member of Congress, who favored the purchase of the Dutch Church property, a piece of ground much smaller in available space than the site actually purchased by the Government. He says in his testimony (House Mis. Doc. 59, p. 63), concerning the Dutch Church property:

* * * We could build a building nearly 80 feet wide, and as deep as you want it to go up to 315 feet, still having a space of 40 feet between the two buildings,

which is wider than many of the streets in our city from curb to curb. The Secretary told me that night he had an idea that they would have to build broad, but I showed him where a building carried up a little higher, or four stories, would answer all purposes. Now, it is impossible for Brooklyn to use a building which could be built on that lot during my lifetime, which I hope will be fifty years longer. We are not like New York, Cincinnati, and Philadelphia, where large amounts of mail matter is distributed. Some people have often thought, and a great many think to-day, that we ought not to have a post-office there at all.

And again (p. 65), Mr. Felix Campbell testifies:

* * * After that my letter was written suggesting the Dutch Church site. That site would afford ample room for a building that would answer all the purposes of the city of Brooklyn for many years to come. The space occupied by the post-office now, I think, is two floors. The first floor is 50 by 110 feet, and my impression is that the second floor is 50 by 80. I was in the office while this thing was pending. The postmaster was not in at the time, but the gentleman representing him was there, and we were talking about room, &c. I wanted to know of them if twice the amount of room they now have would be sufficient for the purposes of the Department in any new building that might be put up. I think the reply was that it would last them twenty years. Now, we could give them more than twice the room they now have on one floor of a building that might be erected on the Dutch Church property.

Some assistance will be obtained in arriving at a conclusion as to the relative importance of the Brooklyn post-office by considering the following figures, showing the numbers of the clerical force, exclusive of city carriers and railway postal clerks at the central post-offices in some of our large cities. These figures are from the last official reports on file in the Post-Office Department:

	Clerks.
New York, main office.....	879
Washington, D. C., main office.....	178
Pittsburgh, Pa., main office.....	76
Detroit, Mich., main office.....	61
Brooklyn, N. Y., main office.....	45

(3) In the investigation in the last Congress many witnesses were examined, and not a single item of testimony was given by friends or opponents of the purchase of the present site to the effect that it was too small for Government purposes. It is significant that the very first witness produced in opposition to the site, when questioned concerning the present site, answered (Mis. Doc. No. 59, p. 157):

A. Well, so far as the size of the site is concerned, it may be suitable enough, but as to the locality I should think it a very unsuitable one.

(4) The reasons assigned by the Supervising Architect for his change of opinion seem to the undersigned to be unsatisfactory. In his letter of March 17, 1886, he advises that the building to be erected will be in danger of fire from the adjoining frame buildings. But the usual space of 40 feet is allowed as a protection against fire, and the width of the streets on the other three sides of the building is but little more. The only other reason given is that it is economy to buy now rather than to purchase when property is at higher prices; but there is no probability that the remainder of this square will be ever needed by the Government. Mr. William J. Frye in his letter, a copy of which is attached to the report of a majority of the committee, states the whole situation when he says that the land can be put into a small park until needed, and that it will add beauty to the building. In the judgment of the undersigned, it is not the duty of the Federal Government to provide a park for the citizens of Brooklyn.

An expenditure of \$1,500,000 on the building will give floor space, according to the estimate of the Supervising Architect, amounting to 135,114 square feet. The amount of floor space now occupied by the

Government in rented quarters is 23,192 square feet, and the estimate of the minimum space required, in September, 1884, was 32,310 square feet. We cannot see any reason, therefore, for indulging in any further extravagance of space. The estimates are appended.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISING ARCHITECT.

July 20, 1886.

SIR: In response to your verbal request I have the honor to submit herewith a statement showing the floor space which can be provided in the post-office building at Brooklyn, N. Y., under the present limit of cost, and the floor space which can be provided in the proposed building under the extended limit of cost, \$1,500,000 for the building alone:

Present building:

	Square feet.
Basement.....	15,240
First story.....	15,240
Second story.....	11,943
Attic.....	9,264

Total..... 51,687

Proposed building:

Basement.....	26,880
First story.....	26,880
Second story.....	21,678
Third story.....	16,320
Fourth story.....	21,678
Attic.....	21,678

Total..... 135,114

I also submit estimate of cost of the building as proposed under the enlarged plan.

Building:

3,565,726 cubic feet at 40 cents.....	\$1,426,290 40
Heating apparatus, 3,565,726 cubic feet at 1½ cents.....	53,485 89
Approaches.....	20,000 00

Total..... 1,499,776 29

Respectfully, yours,

M. E. BELL,
Supervising Architect.

Hon. SAMUEL DIBBLE,
*Chairman Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds,
House of Representatives.*

[Office of the United States District Attorney, Eastern District of New York, corner of Clinton and Montague streets.]

BROOKLYN, N. Y., September 1, 1884.

SIR: In reply to your letter of August 28, I have the honor to inclose statement desired by you. In making my statement of space required, I have made the amount at minimum.

Yours, respectfully,

F. W. ANGEL,
Custodian.

M. E. BELL, Esq.,
Supervising Architect, Washington, D. C.

Statement showing number of employes, title of office, and accommodation at present occupied by each United States official, and an estimate of the minimum amount of accommodation expressed in number of rooms and aggregate square feet of floor space each office will require in the new building.

Office.	Number of rooms.	Floor space now in use.	Minimum floor space required.	Number of employes.
		Square feet.	Square feet.	
Post-office				201
Postmaster's private room	1	300	400	
Postmaster's reception room	1	240	300	
Cashier	1	400	400	
Assistant postmaster	1		400	
Money order and registered letter	1	2, 080	1, 800	
Inquiry department	1	448	400	
Lobby to post-office	1	546	1, 100	
Working department, boxes, distribution, &c., of mail	1	4, 013	12, 000	
United States judge				1
Chambers	1	500	500	
Private room	1	300	300	
Library	1		900	
Court-room	1	2, 400	2, 400	
Consulting room for attorneys	1		1, 000	
Witness room	1	200	200	
Grand jury room	1	1, 000	500	
Petit jury room	1	600	300	
United States clerk				5
Clerk	1	300	300	
Assistant clerk	1	180	180	
General room	1	300	300	
Recording room	1	120	300	
Do	1	620	300	
Copyist	1		120	
United States attorney				3
District attorney	1	210	300	
Assistant attorney	1	120	120	
Outer office	1	350	240	
Record room	1		150	
United States marshal				6
Marshal	1	112	150	
Chief clerk	1	266	200	
Outer office	1	352	150	
Deputies' room	1	400	300	
Storeroom	1	1, 200	400	
Internal revenue				39
Collector	1	460	300	
Chief deputy	1	300	300	
Chief division deputies	1	300	300	
Chief spirits department	1	320	100	
Bond clerk	1	440	100	
Deputy's room	1	665	700	
Business room	1	660	700	
Record room	1	770	500	
Seizure room	1	160	300	
United States commissioners				2
Court-room	1	540	400	
United States supervisor of election	1	1, 080	2, 000	Unknown.

Respectfully,

FRANK WARREN ANGEL,
Custodian.

In conclusion, while in favor of an increase of limit for the building, the undersigned are of the opinion that the Government does not require the additional land for any public use.

If we direct this purchase of land we do not need, some pretext will hereafter be found for building upon it also, and we may expect a result such as the following :

Cost of present site	\$408, 500
Cost of additional land	275, 000
Cost of building on present site	1, 500, 000
Future cost of extension on additional land	1, 500, 000
Total	3, 683, 500

This is an illustration of the methods by which an enterprise, authorized by Congress, with the provision that its cost shall not exceed \$800,000, grows to the magnitude of several millions. And if precedents can be cited of similar prodigality in the past, it is but an additional reason why the lessons of experience should lead us to avoid it in the future.

Certain extracts from the Congressional Record of the first session of the Forty-eighth Congress are appended hereto for further information.

SAMUEL DIBBLE.
BERAH WILKINS.
N. E. WORTHINGTON.
THO. D. JOHNSTON.
W. H. WADE.
W. D. OWEN.

APPENDIX.

Extracts from Congressional Record of Forty-eighth Congress, first session.

March 24, 1884 (page 2222):

BROOKLYN PUBLIC BUILDING.

Mr. ROBINSON, of New York, submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds:

"Resolved, That the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby directed to furnish to this House copies of all orders, reports, recommendations, correspondence, and other papers on file in the Treasury Department relating to the purchase of the site for a public building in the city of Brooklyn, State of New York."

April 17, 1884 (pages 3058, 3059):

Mr. DIBBLE. I now ask consent to submit the report from the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, being a substitute for the resolution referred to that committee.

The SPEAKER. The original resolution will be read, and then the proposed substitute.

The original resolution was read, as follows:

"Resolved, That the Secretary of the Treasury is hereby directed to furnish to this House copies of all orders, reports, recommendations, correspondence, and other papers on file in the Treasury Department relating to the purchase of a site for a public building in the city of Brooklyn and State of New York."

The substitute was read, as follows:

"Whereas a resolution was referred to the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds relative to the purchase of a site for a public building in Brooklyn, N. Y.; and

"Whereas at a hearing before said committee specific charges were made, in writing, and filed with said committee, alleging complicity between some of the officers of the Government and owners of real estate in said city, whereby it is alleged that the Government is likely to be required to pay an exorbitant price for the contemplated site; and

"Whereas it is due to the Government as well as to the officers implicated that the facts should be ascertained: Therefore,

"Be it resolved, That the Secretary of the Treasury is requested to furnish to this House copies of all orders, reports, recommendations, correspondence, and other papers on file relative to the purchase or contemplated purchase of a site for a public building in the city of Brooklyn, N. Y., and that the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds be instructed to investigate the charges made, with power to send for persons and papers; and that the Secretary of the Treasury be requested to suspend negotiations for the purchase of said property pending the investigation."

Mr. DIBBLE. I wish to say, on the part of the committee, that we have proceeded in this matter simply because the charges were before us in writing. We have no further comments or statements to present until we are authorized to investigate and report.

The question was taken upon the substitute, and it was agreed to.

The resolution as amended was then adopted.

June 4, 1884 (pages 483, *et passim*):

Mr. HOPKINS, from the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, reported certain testimony taken by that committee under instructions of the House, in regard to charges of corruption and collusion in reference to the selection and purchase of the site of the Federal building in Brooklyn, N. Y., with resolutions thereon; which resolutions were referred to the House Calendar, and, with the accompanying report, ordered to be printed.

Mr. HOLMAN. A report was made this morning from the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds with regard to the purchase of the site for the Brooklyn post-office. I desire to submit a motion, which I think will not be opposed by the committee, that that report be recommitted to the committee for the purpose of further examination, inasmuch as the result of the investigation by that committee after careful examination is not satisfactory to the people of that district. I ask my friend from Pennsylvania [Mr. Hopkins] to consent that the report be recommitted, and I send up to the Clerk's desk a resolution to be read.

The Clerk read as follows:

"Resolved, That the report of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds on the Brooklyn post office site be recommitted, and that said committee be instructed to reopen the investigation with open doors, giving the citizens of Brooklyn, N. Y., through such counsel as they may designate, the right to examine all testimony so far taken before the said committee, and to examine any and all witnesses who may be hereafter subpoenaed before said committee; and that the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds are requested to especially inquire into the value of the site proposed to be purchased by the Secretary of the Treasury, as to its market value on the 16th day of February, 1884; also to inquire whether the improvements on said site were included in the proposed purchase or were to be removed by the parties making the sale to the Government; also to inquire whether the selection of the proposed site is satisfactory to the citizens of Brooklyn, N. Y., and what voice the Secretary of the Treasury has permitted them to have in the selection of the proposed site; and that the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds be directed to particularly inquire regarding the value of the property owned by one William A. Husted, which is a part of this proposed site, which property is assessed on the map of the assessor's office of the city of Brooklyn, N. Y., at \$29,900, for which the Secretary of the Treasury, it is alleged, proposes to pay \$185,500; and that the Secretary of the Treasury be requested to suspend further negotiations for the purchase of the proposed site pending the investigation.

"That said committee be instructed to make its report herein within ten days for consideration, and is authorized to send a subcommittee of three of its members to Brooklyn, N. Y., to inquire into the facts.

"And that the expenses of said investigation, not to exceed \$200, shall be paid out of the contingent fund of the House."

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. HOLMAN. I now demand the previous question on the resolution as modified.

The previous question was ordered; and under the operation thereof the resolution was adopted.

June 14, 1884 (page 5162):

Mr. HOPKINS. I am directed by the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds to submit the report of their investigation in regard to the selection and purchase of a site for a public building in Brooklyn, N. Y. I ask consent that one or two gentlemen of the committee may be permitted to file their views upon one point not embraced in the report of the majority. I will state that the entire committee agree to the resolutions appended to the report.

The SPEAKER. The resolutions will be read.

The Clerk read as follows:

"Resolved, That the charges of corrupt or collusive action on the part of the Secretary of the Treasury, or some of his subordinates, in connection with the selection and purchases of a site for a Federal building in the city of Brooklyn, have not been sustained.

"Resolved, That the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds be discharged from the further consideration of the matters referred to them in this regard."

June 19, 1884 (pages 5344-5348):

PUBLIC BUILDING, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Mr. HOPKINS. I now desire to call up the report of the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds, which is a privileged report.

The SPEAKER. That is a privileged report, and the Clerk will report the resolutions submitted by the committee.

The Clerk read as follows:

"Resolved, That the charges of corrupt or collusive action on the part of the Secretary of the Treasury, or of some of his subordinates, in connection with the selection and purchase of a site for a Federal building in the city of Brooklyn have not been sustained.

"Resolved, That the Committee on Public Buildings and Grounds be discharged from the further consideration of the matters referred to them in this regard."

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Mr. HOLMAN. The Secretary of the Treasury has agreed to pay for the site alone \$450,000, I believe.

Mr. STOCKSLAGER. Four hundred and eight thousand dollars now.

Mr. HOLMAN. Four hundred and eight thousand dollars for the site alone. In other words, more than one-half of the entire appropriation is expended for the site alone.

Now, does the committee think that it was in conformity with the duties of the Secretary of the Treasury, acting under an act of Congress, to appropriate for the site alone more than one-half of the entire sum? Was it not a matter which required careful consideration how far the Secretary of the Treasury was justifiable in compelling Congress, as it were, to appropriate a larger sum of money for this purpose than was originally intended?

Mr. STOCKSLAGER. A portion of the members of the committee, and I must say that I was one of them, was of opinion that with the limit of the appropriation fixed at \$800,000 it was not wise and not judicious on the part of the Secretary of the Treasury to expend so large a sum for the site alone; that he did not exercise a wise discretion in expending \$408,000 for the purchase of the site. Yet we did not feel that we were called upon to submit resolutions upon that subject, but simply to report the facts to the House and let the House say what action it deemed proper to take on the subject. I desire to say that I concur heartily in all that my friend from South Carolina [Mr. Dibble] has said on the subject, with the exception that I believe the sum of \$800,000 is amply sufficient to purchase a suitable site and to erect thereon a suitable building for the city of Brooklyn. I believe a site as eligible as this, if not more so, could have been purchased and a building erected thereon which would have met all the present and future wants of the city of Brooklyn within the appropriation of \$800,000.

Mr. ADAMS, of Illinois. I ask the gentleman to state where that site is. I simply ask for information; I know nothing about this matter.

Mr. STOCKSLAGER. My judgment as a member of the committee would be that the Dutch Church property, which could be purchased for \$260,000, would have been a more eligible site than the one selected. There were objections to that site, however.

Mr. ADAMS, of Illinois. What were they?

Mr. STOCKSLAGER. If I had more time I could explain them. The committee have set forth the facts very fully in their report.

Mr. HOLMAN. I wish to inquire of my colleague whether it does not necessarily follow, if this purchase should be ratified, that Congress will be required to appropriate a further sum of money for the construction of this building?

Mr. STOCKSLAGER. I think so.

Mr. PUSEY. Three hundred thousand dollars will be sufficient for the building.

And in this connection I desire to quote from the evidence of Mr. Bell, the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, upon that point:

"By Mr. STOCKSLAGER:

"Q. Was the selection of this Johnson-street site and its purchase at the price named with a view to the erection of a public building within the appropriation of \$800,000?

"A. Yes, sir; the understanding that we had with all the Congressmen was that we were to buy a piece of property that would cost anywhere less than \$500,000. We could not exceed that sum, and the Secretary put that question very decidedly to all of the Congressmen whether or not they as a body would be satisfied with a building if we paid \$475,000 for a piece of property, and only had \$325,000 for the building? They said that they would be satisfied, with the understanding that at such a time as the selection was made they would go to Congress and get the limit of the appropriation extended.

"Q. Then it was not with a view to the completion of the building within that limitation?

"A. That was my understanding of the matter.

"Q. With that understanding do you think it would be wise to buy a site costing \$450,000, when the appropriation was limited to \$800,000?

"A. I think it would, for this reason: That a part of the whole building could be built, as is frequently done, that in itself is a unit and will serve the purpose for the present, and in future years, when the necessities of the Government increase, you can add to it and increase the building to any size desired. My intention was to consider the question in relation to the limit of cost, which was \$800,000, and put up one wing of the building complete in itself, costing \$350,000."

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Mr. SLOCUM. There is but one proper subject of inquiry for Congress in connection with this matter, and that is whether the Government officers have been guilty of fraudulent conduct. Beyond that Congress has nothing to do.

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The question then recurred on the resolution reported from the committee. The resolution was adopted.

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